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Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its resumed 2008 session

(New York, 29 May-6 June and on 25 June 2008)

Summary

At its resumed 2008 session, held from 29 May to 6 June and on 25 June 2008, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had before it 126 applications for consultative status, including applications deferred from its 1999 to 2008 sessions. Of those applications, the Committee recommended 64 applications for consultative status, deferred 55 non-governmental organizations for further consideration at a later date and closed consideration of 2 non-governmental organizations. It did not recommend consultative status for one non-governmental organization deferred from previous sessions. The Committee had before it three requests for reclassification of consultative status, of which it recommended one. In addition, it reviewed 139 quadrennial reports, 13 of which had been deferred from previous sessions. The Committee heard six representatives of non-governmental organizations.

The present report contains one draft resolution and five draft decisions on matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council.

By draft decision I, the Council would:

(a) Grant consultative status to 64 non-governmental organizations;

(b) Reclassify one non-governmental organization;

(c) Note that the Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of 126 non-governmental organizations;

(d) Decide to close consideration of the applications of two non-governmental organizations;

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(e) Note that the Committee decided to take note of the withdrawal of the applications of two non-governmental organizations.

By draft decision II, the Council would decide not to grant consultative status to the non-governmental organization Human Rights Foundation.

The Chairperson made a statement on the reinstatement of status of the organization Liberal International.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the provisions of its resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 on the consultative relationship between the Economic and Social Council and non-governmental organizations,

Aware of the evolving relationship between the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations community, reflecting the broader and more substantive involvement of non-governmental organizations with the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations at large,

Mindful of the significant increase in the number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that has occurred in recent years and conscious that the number will continue to increase in the foreseeable future,

Mindful also of the demands that the expansion of the participation of non-governmental organizations places on the workload and resources of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat,

Recalling paragraph 68 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 regarding the requirement for adequate Secretariat support to fulfil the mandate defined for the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations with respect to carrying out the wider range of activities in which the enhanced involvement of non-governmental organizations was envisaged,

Recalling the regular programme of technical cooperation under section 22 of the programme budget of the United Nations,

Emphasizing the need to ensure that the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is able to operate efficiently in carrying out its mandate at the optimum level of performance,

Emphasizing also the need to strengthen partnership with civil society, as emphasized by the Secretary-General within the reform of the United Nations, by integrating analytical capacity with technical cooperation activities for greater effectiveness and efficiency,

1. *Regrets* the weak capacity of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and requests the Secretary-General to ensure the full utilization of the resources allocated to it as well as the filling of all vacant posts and to report on proposals to further strengthen the capacity of the Non-Governmental Organizations

Section within the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 and the maintenance of the institutional memory of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, thereby making full use of lessons learned and best practices within the Section so as to enable it to carry out its responsibilities efficiently and effectively;

2. *Recommends* that a technical cooperation programme be established for the Non-Governmental Organizations Section aiming at providing advisory services, the conduct of capacity-building workshops designed to launch the United Nations Non-Governmental Organization Informal Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE) at regional, subregional and national levels, and the development of training materials and the promotion of pilot joint partnership initiatives, projects and programmes involving the United Nations, civil society and Governments worldwide, especially for the countries most in need.

B. Draft decisions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

2. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

Draft decision I
Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides:

(a) To grant consultative status to the following 64 non-governmental organizations:

General consultative status

China NGO Network for International Exchanges

Special consultative status

African Child Care Association

Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development

Al-Zubair Charity Foundation

American Association of University Women

All about Social, Economic, Educational Rights

Asociación Mujeres Unidas para el Microcrédito

Association d'équipements Collectifs La Castellane

Association VERSeau Développement

Centro de Información y Educación para la Prevención del Abuso de Drogas

Cercle de recherche sur les droits et les devoirs de la personne humaine

Child Family Health International

Comité pour les relations internationales de jeunesse de la communauté française de Belgique

CARAM Asia Berhad

Dutch Council for Refugees

Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit COC Nederland

Fondation Connaissance et Liberté

Fondation Ostad Elahi: ethique et solidarite humaine

Foundation for a Culture of Peace

Fundacion Instituto Psicopedagogico Uruguayo

Fundacion Paz Mundial

Fund for Women in Asia

General Research Institute for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

Global Hand

Globe Aware

Health for Humanity

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

Hudson Institute

Institut International des Sciences Politiques

International Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Instituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice

IT for Change

Junior Achievement Worldwide

Knights of the Southern Cross

Learning and Development Kenya

Mother Child Education Foundation

National Women's Studies Association

Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women

Partnership for Global Justice

Plateforme pour le développement durable des Caraïbes

Red Venezolana de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo Social

Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra

Service for Peace

Ship and Ocean Foundation

Smile of a Child

Society Studies Center

Vikash

Voices of African Mothers

Women and Modern World Centre

Women's Health and Education Center

Women's Rights Association against Discrimination

Women's Shadow Parliament (Kenya)

Roster

Center for Health and Gender Equity

Comitato Ev-K2-CNR

Kabbalah Centre

Ligue pour le droit de la femme congolaise

National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs

New Zealand Council of Licensed Firearms Owners

Nigerian Healthcare Foundation

NTIC et Citoyenneté

Play Soccer

Trance Research Foundation

Village Suisse

(b) To reclassify the following non-governmental organization from roster to special consultative status:

International Association for Media and Communication Research

(c) To note that the Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of the following 126 organizations (years of reporting are 2003-2006, unless otherwise indicated in parentheses):

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

All-China Women's Federation

All-Russian Social Fund

Antiviolence Center

Association algérienne d'alphabétisation

Association for Democratic Initiatives

Association for Progressive Communications

Association of Medical Doctors of Asia

Association of United Families International

Buddha's Light International Association

CARE International

Centre d'accompagnement des autochtones pygmées et minoritaires vulnerables

Centre for Democracy and Development

Cercle des amis de la forêt pour le 21e siècle

Citizens' Rights Protection Society

Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations

Coordination des immigrés du Sud du monde

Defence for Children International

Disabled Peoples International

European Disability Forum

European Forum for Victim Services

European Youth Forum

Family Planning Association of Turkey

Federación de Asociaciones de Defensa y Promotion de los Derechos Hermanos (2003-2006)

Fédération de Tunis de solidarité sociale

Federation of Associations of Former Civil Servants

Focus on the Family

Fondation Guilé

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute (2002-2005)

Fund of Aid for Youth

German Foundation for World Population

Global Action on Aging

Global Fund for Women

Global Volunteers

Green Earth Organization

Handicap International

Hariri Foundation

HelpAge International

Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation

Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Human Appeal International

Institut international des sciences administratives

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

Interact Worldwide

Interaction: American Council for Voluntary International Action

International Alert

International Association for the Defence of Religious Liberty

International Association for Water Law

International Association of Charities

International Association of Peace Messenger Cities

International Bar Association

International Cartographic Association

International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development

International Chamber of Shipping

International Commission on Distance Education

International Council of Scientific Unions

International Council of Women

International Council on Human Rights Policy

International Council on Mining and Metals

International Driving Tests Committee

International Federation for Family Development

International Federation for Housing and Planning

International Federation of ACAT

International Federation of Agricultural Producers

International Federation of Associations of the Elderly

International Federation of Medical Students' Associations

International Federation of Persons with Physical Disability

International Federation of University Women

International Federation Terre des Hommes

International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples (2001-2004)

International Longevity Center

International Movement ATD Fourth World

International Organization for Standardization

International Planned Parenthood Federation (western hemisphere region)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (Europe region)

International Road Federation

International Social Security Association

International Women's Health Coalition

Inter-Press Service International Association

Japan Civil Liberties Union

Japan Federation of Bar Associations

Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development

Kids Can Free the Children

Korean Institute for Women and Politics

Legião da Boa Vontade

Life Ethics Educational Association

Life for Relief and Development

Mercy-USA for Aid and Development

Movement for a Better World

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

National Bar Association

National Council of Women of the United States

National Safety Council

National Wildlife Federation

Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation

Network Women in Development Europe

Nord-Sud XXI

Oasis Open City Foundation

Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement International

Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities

Panamerican-Panafrican Association

Pathfinder International

Perhaps Kids Meeting Kids Can Make a Difference

Permanent Assembly for Human Rights

Program for Appropriate Technology in Health

Rencontre africaine pour la defense des droits de l'homme

Resources for the Future

RICS Foundation

Several Sources Foundation

Socialist International

Society for the Protection of Unborn Children

SOS-Kinderdorf International

Stichting Projekta: Foundation for Women and Development Services

Trickle Up Program

United Nations Association of San Diego

Wittenberg Center for Alternative Resources

Women's Commission Research and Education Fund

Women's World Summit Foundation

World Association of Children's Friends

World Economic Forum

World Federation of Democratic Youth

World Federation of United Nations Associations

World Organization of Building Officials

World Savings Banks Institute

Youth with a Mission

(d) To also note that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations closed consideration of the application for consultative status made by the following two non-governmental organizations:

Ma Qualcuno Pensi ad Abele

Armenia Fund USA

(e) To further note that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decided to take note of the withdrawal by the following two organizations of their applications for consultative status:

Observer Research Foundation

Chinese Society for Corrosion and Protection

Draft decision II
Application of the non-governmental organization Human Rights Foundation for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council decides not to grant consultative status with the Council to the non-governmental organization Human Rights Foundation.

Draft decision III
Complaint against the non-governmental organization World Union for Progressive Judaism

The Economic and Social Council decides to dispose of the complaint against the non-governmental organization World Union for Progressive Judaism.

Draft decision IV
Dates of and provisional agenda for the 2009 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

The Economic and Social Council:

(a) Decides that the 2009 regular session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations will be held from 19 to 28 January 2009 and its resumed session from 18 to 27 May 2009;

(b) Approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the 2009 session of the Committee as set out below.

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations:
   (a) Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee;
   (b) New applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification;
   (c) Applications of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that have merged with non-governmental organizations without such consultative status.
4. Quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council:
   (a) Deferred quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council;
   (b) Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council.
5. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.
6. Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, including the process of accreditation of representatives of non-governmental organizations, and Council decision 1995/304:
   (a) Process of accreditation of representatives of non-governmental organizations;
   (b) Consideration of issues on the agenda of the informal working group;
   (c) Other related matters.
7. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46.
8. Consideration of special reports.

9. General voluntary trust fund in support of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network.

10. Provisional agenda and documentation for the 2010 session of the Committee.

11. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

Draft decision V
Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2008 resumed session

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2008 resumed session.

C. Matters brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council

Statement by the Chairperson of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on the reinstatement of the status of the organization Liberal International

3. "The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations takes note and acknowledges the fact that one year of suspension of the organization Liberal International will come to an end on 20 July 2008."

II. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification

4. The Committee considered item 3 of its agenda at its 17th-23rd, 26th, 27th and 29th-31st meetings, from 29 May to 6 June and on 25 June 2008. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing new applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/2008/R.2/Add.21-31), and a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing requests for reclassification from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/2008/R.3/Add.2), as well as a compilation of applications for consultative status deferred from previous sessions (E/C.2/2008/CRP.7 and CRP.9).

A. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee

5. The Committee considered item 3 (a) of its agenda, applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee, contained in documents (E/C.2/2008/CRP.7 and CRP.9) at its 20th-23rd, 27th, 30th and 31st meetings, from 29 May to 6 June and on 25 June 2008.

Applications recommended

6. The Committee recommended that the Council grant consultative status to 20 non-governmental organizations whose applications had been deferred from previous sessions (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (a)):

Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development

Cercle de recherche sur les droits et les devoirs de la personne humaine

Comitato Ev-K2-CNR

Dutch Council for Refugees

Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit

Fondation Ostad Elahi: ethique et solidarité humain

Fund for Women in Asia

General Research Institute for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Global Hand

Globe Aware

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

Hudson Institute

Kabbalah Centre

National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs

New Zealand Council of Licensed Firearms Owners

Partnership for Global Justice

Play Soccer

Red Venezolana de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo Social

Trance Research Foundation

Women's Health and Education Center

Applications deferred pending responses to questions posed by the Committee

7. The Committee deferred its consideration of the applications of the following 44 non-governmental organizations pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee during its 2008 resumed session:

Africa Action

Agape International Spiritual Center

Ambassadors for Children

Ambedkar Centre for Justice and Peace

Asian-Eurasian Human Rights Forum

Associação Brasileira de Gays, Lésbicas e Transgêneros

Association malienne d'initiatives et d'actions pour le développement

Assyrian Academic Society

Better Life Programme for the African (Rural) Woman

Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights

Coordination internationale pour la décennie

Democracy Coalition Project

Drug Policy Alliance

Dynamic Christian World Mission Foundation

Environment Action Association

European Renewable Energy Council

Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine

Forest Products Associations of Canada

Human Rights Education Associates

Human Rights House Foundation

International Centre for Peace Studies

International Center for Transitional Justice

International Dalit Solidarity Network

International Federation of Liberal Youth

International Foundation for Dharma Nature Time

International Human Rights Observer

International Reading Association

International Sustainable Energy Organisation for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Kashmiri American Council

Kosmos Associates

Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre

Marijuana Policy Project Foundation

National Association of Home Builders

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs

Neda Institute for Scientific and Political Studies

PeaceJam Foundation

People's Life Centre

Social Alert

Spirituality for Kids Europe

Students for Sensible Drug Policy

Sub-Priorato del Piemonte dell'Ordine di San Fortunato

TRIAL

Verein Südwind Entwicklungspolitik

Women's Business Development Center

Applications closed

8. At its 23rd and 30th meetings, on 3 and 6 June 2008, the Committee decided to close consideration of the applications of two non-governmental organizations (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (d)):

Ma Qualcuno Pensi ad Abele

Armenia Fund USA

Ma Qualcuno Pensi ad Abele

9. At the 30th meeting, on 6 June 2008, the representative of Cuba pointed out that at the current session of the Committee, the organization had provided the same answers to various sets of questions posed by a number of delegations as in previous sessions of the Committee and had not clarified several questions posed by a number of delegations.

Armenia Fund USA

10. At the 23rd meeting, on 3 June 2008, the representative of Turkey stated that the organization did not adhere to United Nations terminology regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan despite repeated invitations of the Committee to do so. Consequently, since it did not meet the criteria required to apply for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council as stipulated in resolution 1996/31, the Committee had no alternative but to close consideration of the application.

Applications requested to be withdrawn

11. At its 23rd meeting, on 3 June 2008, the Committee took note of the requests of two organizations to withdraw their applications (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (e)):

Observer Research Foundation

Chinese Society for Corrosion and Protection

Observer Research Foundation

12. The representative of Pakistan pointed out that the organization had failed to respond to the questions posed by many delegations. The organization had also repeatedly used incorrect terminology regarding certain geographical references despite multiple reminders by the Committee. Instead of complying with the provisions of Council resolution 1996/31 on the use of United Nations terminology, the organization had used inappropriate language about some Member States, which reflected the political bias of the non-governmental organization and complete disregard for the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and resolution

1996/31. China, Egypt and Turkey also emphasized the importance of strict compliance with the principle of using United Nations terminology by all non-governmental organizations seeking consultative status with the Council.

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

13. At its 23rd and 28th meetings on 3 and 5 June 2008, the Committee considered the application of the non-governmental organization Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, which had been deferred from the regular session of the Committee, in January 2008. At that session, the Committee had exchanged views with the representative of the organization, who provided responses, both orally and in writing.

14. During the resumed session, the representative of the organization responded to additional questions posed by several members of the Committee, in addition to the observer delegations of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic, in particular regarding the organization's adherence to resolutions and decisions of the principal organs of the United Nations on the question of Palestinian refugees, humanitarian assistance to Arab populations under Israeli occupation and its role in resettling Jewish immigrants in the illegal settlements in the occupied territories.

15. The representative of the organization explained, both orally and in writing that, as a non-political entity whose work was of a humanitarian nature, the organization respected the resolutions and decisions of the principal organs, but had no position on them. He underlined that the organization delivered humanitarian assistance to refugees and facilitated their protection, regardless of ethnicity or creed. The representative also confirmed that the organization did not discriminate against Palestinian refugees and had no resettlement activities in the occupied territories.

16. Accordingly, the Committee decided to recommend granting special consultative status to the organization by consensus. In statements after the decision, the representatives of Egypt and Qatar welcomed the consensus and indicated that the Committee should continue to monitor the activities of the organization, inter alia, through the quadrennial reports, as with any other organization, to ensure that it conformed at all times to the principles governing the establishment and nature of its consultative relations with the Council.

17. The representative of Israel congratulated the organization for being recommended by the Committee for special consultative status and emphasized the contributions that the organization would make to the work of the Council and the United Nations, especially concerning humanitarian issues and assisting immigrants. He stressed the crucial role civil society played in the work of the United Nations. The representative of Israel questioned the motives and posturing of some delegations who had seemingly launched a complaint against the organization for purely political reasons.

Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit COC Nederland

18. At its 23rd and 30th meetings on 3 and 6 June 2008, the Committee considered the application of the non-governmental organization Federatie van Nederlandse

Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit (COC Nederland), deferred from the previous session of the Committee.

19. At its regular session in January 2008, the Committee exchanged views with the representative of the organization, who provided responses to questions posed by the Committee, both orally and in writing. On 3 June 2008, the representative of the organization responded to questions posed by several members of the Committee.

20. On 6 June 2008, the delegates of Egypt and Qatar posed some additional questions and sought clarifications by the non-governmental organization regarding paedophilia and the terms of reference in international legal instruments for its usage of the term "sexual minorities". However, upon a request made by the delegation of the United Kingdom, supported by Romania and Colombia, the Committee proceeded to a vote on the application of the organization.

General statements before the vote

21. The representative of Egypt underlined that the additional questions posed to the organization merited answers. Consequently, he did not support the proposal that the Committee had to rush to take action on the organization at its 2008 resumed session as was the norm with the Committee. He found the procedure followed to be discriminatory.

22. The representative of Israel stated that his delegation would support the organization since its representatives had answered all questions posed to them and would add to the diversity and contribute to the work of the Economic and Social Council. He was of the view that the organization met the criteria for consultative status with the Council.

23. The representative of Qatar pointed out that his delegations had additional questions to pose to the organization and believed that the Committee should follow the appropriate procedure before rushing to a vote.

24. The representative of the observer delegation of the Netherlands, stated that the organization was a reliable organization with years of experience in the promotion of human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. In his view, the organization worked to combat discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons and to promote their integration into Dutch society, which he considered to be an important contribution to the goals of the United Nations and met the criteria for accreditation with the Council as set out in Council resolution 1996/31.

25. Subsequently, by a roll-call vote of 7 to 6, with 5 abstentions, the Committee decided to recommend granting special consultative status to the organization Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit COC Nederland.

In favour:

Colombia, Dominica, Israel, Peru, Romania, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against:

China, Egypt, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan.

Abstaining:

Angola, Burundi, Guinea, India, Turkey.

Statements in explanation of vote after the vote

26. The representative of the United Kingdom, supported by Romania, stated that, although a number of members in the Committee might disagree with the philosophies of particular organizations, that was no cause for their exclusion. Organizations such as COC Nederland deserved equal rights with others to engage in the work of the United Nations. The organization had responded in depth to the subsequent questions posed by the members of the Committee, had an agenda falling within the competence of the Council and was in compliance with the principles guiding resolution 1996/31 and with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

27. The representatives of Egypt and Qatar stressed that the decision taken by the Committee regarding COC Nederland was a setback for the Committee, since some very important questions posed by some Member States had been left unanswered.

Request for reclassification deferred from previous sessions

28. At its 31st meeting, on 25 June 2008, the Committee had before it one request for reclassification of consultative status, deferred from its previous session, contained in document E/C.2/2008/CRP.9. It decided to defer consideration of the reclassification of the following organization from the roster to special consultative status pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee during its 2008 resumed session:

International Movement against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism

B. New applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification

29. The Committee considered item 3 (b) of its agenda, new applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification, contained in documents E/C.2/2008/R.2/Add.21-31, and E/C.2/2008/R.3/Add.2, at its 17th through 19th, 26th, 27th, and 29th through 31st meetings, on 29 to 30 May, 4 through 6 and 25 June 2008.

1. New applications for consultative status

Applications recommended

30. The Committee recommended that consultative status with the Council be granted to 64 organizations, which had submitted new applications (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (a)).

Applications deferred pending responses to questions posed by the Committee

31. The Committee deferred its consideration of the applications of the following nine organizations pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee at its 2008 resumed session:

Association LESTIME: communauté lesbienne de Genève

Genève pour les droits de l'homme

Hope Medical Enterprises

International Association of Women Judges

International Gas Union

Presse emblème campagne

Saferworld

Universitas 21

WITNESS

Application not recommended

Human Rights Foundation

32. At its 29th meeting, on 6 June 2008, the Committee considered the application of Human Rights Foundation, an organization based in the United States of America.

33. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Cuba delivered a statement raising several objections to the organization, stating that its chairman, Armando Valladares, was a convicted criminal in her country, as he had participated in a number of terrorist activities shortly after the Battista era. She circulated a number of documents in support of her statement, including tribunal documents describing Armando Valladares' "links to 'bomb factories'" and newspaper clippings showing photographs of Mr. Valladares with other suspects. She further denounced the subversive activities of the organization in Bolivia.

34. The representatives of Angola, Burundi, China, Dominica, Egypt, Guinea, the Russian Federation, the Sudan and the observer delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) expressed support for the Cuban representative.

35. However, the representative of the United States, with the support of the representatives of Israel, Peru and the United Kingdom, asked the Committee to defer consideration of the organization to the next session of the Committee, during which time the organization could be requested to send a representative to the Committee to respond to questions posed by its members. The representative of the United States stated that Mr. Valladares had been a "prisoner of conscience", jailed by the Cuban authorities for 22 years, but was now recognized as a distinguished poet and writer and was living in the United States.

36. The motion to adjourn debate on the application of the organization, under rule 50 of the rules of procedure of the Council proposed by the United States, was put to a vote at the request of the representative of Cuba, supported by China. The delegation of Cuba proposed to take action without further delay, asserting that the responses of the organization to questions put forward by the Committee and its activities showed serious violations of Council resolution 1996/31. The delegation of the United States refuted the claim by the Cuban delegation.

37. The motion for adjournment was rejected by a roll-call vote of 12 to 6, with 1 abstention.

In favour:

Colombia, Israel, Peru, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against:

Angola, Burundi, China, Cuba, Dominica, Egypt, Guinea, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan, Turkey.

Abstaining:

India.

38. The Committee then proceeded to vote on the proposal made by Cuba not to grant consultative status to the non-governmental organization Human Rights Foundation.

General statements before the vote

39. The representative of the United States expressed his regret that the Committee had not given the non-governmental organization the opportunity to express its views before the Committee. He stated that it was the organization's mission to defend rights of freedom of speech carried out throughout Latin American countries in exemplary fashion. He wondered why the Committee was in such a hurry to take action on the application of the organization, which was being considered for the first time at the current session.

40. The delegation of Cuba pointed out the clear link between Mr. Valladares, chairman of the organization, and terrorist activities and also emphasized that the organization was allowed to respond to many questions of the Committee, showing the politically motivated nature of its activities. He also explained that despite the organization being located some blocks from the United Nations building it had not sent any representative to respond to the serious concerns expressed by the Committee.

41. The proposal made by Cuba was adopted by a roll-call vote of 13 to 3, with 2 abstentions.

In favour:

Angola, Burundi, China, Cuba, Dominica, Egypt, Guinea, India, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan, Turkey.

Against:

Colombia, Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Statements in explanation of vote after the vote

42. The representatives of Burundi, Qatar and the Sudan stated that, in the light of the information provided to the Committee, they had voted against granting consultative status to the organization. The decision was in line with the principles of Council resolution 1996/31 and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

43. The representative of Egypt regretted that the organization refused to faithfully reveal all the sources of voluntary contributions it received in accordance with paragraph 13 of Council resolution 1996/31, although it was clearly requested to do

so by the Committee. He underlined that the refusal raised suspicion about the activities of the organization, particularly in the light of the information provided by the delegation of Cuba, leaving his delegation with no alternative but to vote against granting consultative status to the organization in view of Egypt's full commitment to reinforcing international efforts aimed at combating terrorism.

44. The representative of China said the decision made by the Committee was not only in line with the Charter of the United Nations and in the spirit of Council resolution 1996/31 but also consistent with other decisions of the Committee with regard to the issue of terrorism. He emphasized that China opposed all forms of terrorism and that the international community should apply the same criteria to fight all kinds of terrorist activities.

45. The representative of Israel said that his country was in the forefront of the fight against terrorism and would never support an organization known for its terrorist activities. As such, additional time and information was needed. He regretted that his delegation had been forced to go to a vote without the organization having been given the opportunity to explain its activities before the Committee at its next session.

46. The representatives of Romania and the United Kingdom supported the views expressed by Israel. They regretted that the Committee had not been granted more time to examine the accusation and had been rushed to take a decision on the application, which was before the Committee for the first time. The representative of the United Kingdom also added that the information provided by the representative of Cuba was only delivered in Spanish.

General statement after the vote

47. The representative of Cuba stated that the Committee had questioned the organization. In its responses, the organization had denied engaging in any political activities, when in fact it was a political organization. He pointed out that any representative of the non-governmental organization could participate voluntarily in the session of the Committee, but that the non-governmental organization had chosen not to do so. The Committee had taken the proper action regarding the organization, as it had in the past with organizations that had political ties in violation of Council resolution 1996/31.

48. The representative of the United States emphasized that if the Committee had asked the organization to have a representative come to the Committee to respond to the questions posed by some of its members, the organization would certainly have complied. He maintained that, as the non-governmental organization was not present in the room, the Committee had violated the preamble to its own founding resolution (Council resolution 1996/31), which stipulated that the Council should encourage "the breadth and diversity of views" contributed by non-governmental organizations at its deliberations.

2. New requests for reclassification

49. At its 31st meeting, on 25 June 2008, the Committee had before it two requests for reclassification of consultative status contained in document E/C.2/2008/R.3/Add.2.

50. It decided to recommend the reclassification of one organization from roster to special consultative status (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (b)). It decided to defer the reclassification of the following organization from special consultative status to general consultative status pending receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee:

Femmes Afrique solidarité

C. Applications of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that have merged with non-governmental organizations without such consultative status

51. The Committee did not have any applications of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that had merged with non-governmental organizations without such consultative status.

III. Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

A. Deferred quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

52. The Committee considered item 4 (a) of its agenda at its 25th meeting, on 4 June 2008. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing a compilation of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council on their activities during the period 1999-2008, which had been deferred from previous sessions of the Committee (E/C.2/2008/CRP.8). The Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of the following five organizations (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (c)):

Centre d'accompagnement des autochtones pygmées et minoritaires vulnerables

Federación de Asociaciones de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples

53. The Committee decided to defer its consideration of the quadrennial reports of the following eight organizations, pending the receipt of responses from the organizations to questions posed by the Committee:

Armenian Assembly of America

Centrist Democratic International

Christian Democratic International (now Centrist Democratic International)

Human Rights Internet

International Press Institute

National Council of Women of Thailand

Pax Christi International

Ukrainian World Congress

B. Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

54. The Committee considered agenda item 4 (b) of its agenda at its 25th meeting, on 4 June 2008. It had before it notes by the Secretary-General containing new quadrennial reports set out in documents E/C.2/2008/2/Add.12-26, which the Committee did not review at its regular session, owing to lack of time, and quadrennial reports set out in documents E/C.2/2008/2/Add.27-36. The Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of 121 organizations (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (c)).

55. The Committee decided to defer its consideration of the quadrennial reports of the following five organizations, pending the receipt of responses from the organizations to the questions posed by the Committee:

Freedom House

Heritage Foundation

International Network of Liberal Women

Ligue internationale contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme

Transnational Radical Party

IV. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat

56. At its 28th meeting, on 5 June 2008, the Committee heard a statement by Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who updated members of the Committee on the activities and staffing of the Section. Describing the current staffing problem and the growing workload in the Section, she invited the Committee to consider the situation as an opportunity to review, overhaul and modernize the system and methods used in processing applications and in the quadrennial reports review, and to consider a greater use of new information technology.

57. Relying increasingly on new information technology and improving the information technology skills of the staff could close the divide between the staff current profile, qualifications, and motivation. The Section suffered from aging methodology and could benefit from a review and analysis of its information and

communications technology needs. In that regard, a presentation on the integrated civil society organizations system was made. It forecast how the Non-Governmental Organizations Section would incorporate new technology in its activities in the near future.

58. With regard to the strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, while the Committee expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the Secretariat, it also pointed out various problems that had impeded the effective functioning of the Committee.

59. Briefed on the increasing number of new applications, according to the statistics provided (173 in 2007, 273 in 2008, approximately 300 in 2009), the Committee was of the opinion that the workload could not be handled by the Section, which clearly was not operating at its full capacity. Although this situation will be reviewed by the informal working group, the delegation of Egypt presented a draft resolution, with no budgetary implications, in support of the Section, which was adopted by consensus (see part I, chapter I, draft resolution I).

60. It is worth noting that the Paperless Committee project, established to help reduce cumbersome paperwork and to streamline consultations and management records for servicing the 19 members of the Committee, had been selected to receive the United Nations 21 Award for 2007 in the category of "process re-engineering". This project had resulted in over $1.5 million in savings in meeting time, including savings in paper documentation. It had led to changes in the 2008/09 budget by reducing the number of meetings of the Committee, from 100 to 60 for the current biennium.

61. In 2007/08, the system was redesigned and given its current format, and went from being a record retrieval system to a full-scale record management and meeting system. It now manages the core processes mandated to the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, and successfully facilitates coordination of information, not only to the members of the Committee, but also between the Secretariat and the applying organizations.

Action taken by the Committee: "Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs"

62. At the 28th meeting, on 5 June 2008, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs", introduced by the representative of Egypt and contained in an informal paper circulated in English only.

63. At the same meeting, the Committee recommended the resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (see chap. I, sect. A).

V. Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, including the process of accreditation of representatives of non-governmental organizations, and Council decision 1995/304

A. Consideration of issues on the agenda of the informal working group

64. At its 31st meeting, on 25 June 2008, the facilitator of the informal working group of the Committee, Serhat Aksen (Turkey), reported on the work of the informal working group.

65. The informal working group of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations discussed the following issues:

Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures

66. One delegation drew the attention of the informal working group to the fact that, in accordance with the oral decision adopted by the Committee on 30 January 2008, the Non-Governmental Organizations Section was mandated to send a final reminder to the non-governmental organizations that had failed to submit their quadrennial reports for more than two reporting periods. A copy of the letter was supposed to have been sent simultaneously to the permanent mission of the country where the non-governmental organization had its headquarters; however, the letters had been sent to the permanent missions at a very late stage.

67. The informal working group discussed the possible consequences of this late submission of letters to the permanent missions.

68. It was agreed that the draft resolution on "Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures", which contained general measures to improve the reporting process, should still be submitted to the Council.

Ways to ensure that non-governmental organizations being considered for consultative status or reviewed for any other matter are not involved in any international criminal activity, including terrorism, as envisaged in Council resolution 1996/31

69. In accordance with the decision adopted by the Committee on 30 January 2008, the informal working group discussed, inter alia, ways to ensure that non-governmental organizations being considered for consultative status or reviewed for any other matter were not involved in any international criminal activity, including terrorism, as envisaged in Council resolution 1996/31.

70. As a matter of principle, all the delegations taking part in the discussion underlined the importance of ensuring that consultative status should not be granted to any non-governmental organization involved in any international criminal activity, including terrorism.

71. The delegation of the United States stated that the Secretariat should benefit from all United Nations criminal and terrorist databases and lists, including the list

prepared by the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council (Security Council resolution 1267 (1999)) in screening the applications for consultative status.

72. A number of delegations questioned the applicability of that suggestion in the light of the mandate and capacity of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, as well as in the light of the mandate arising from the Security Council resolution 1267 (1999) and Council resolution 1996/31.

73. Various delegations were of the view that the Security Council list did not include all terrorist organizations and they underlined the presence of other lists of terrorist organizations, such as national lists. They were of the view that national lists should continue to be taken into consideration. The delegation of Cuba particularly insisted that unless national lists were taken into consideration, there would not be any basis for his delegation to continue the discussion.

74. Concerns were also raised that it was not only the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, but also other United Nations agencies, that could grant roster status and therefore such a screening by the Non-Governmental Organizations Section would not be all-inclusive.

Deadline for submission of letters of intent

75. The informal working group underlined that the deadline for the submission of letters of intent, which reflected the non-governmental organization's willingness to apply for consultative status, should be firmly respected by the Secretariat to ensure orderly and fair treatment of the applications. The deadline is contained in paragraph 61 (b) of Council resolution 1996/31. (The working group was of the view that, due to improvements in communication technologies, respecting the deadline would not be prejudicial to applications from developing countries, despite an increase in the number of such applications.)

76. In conclusion, the Committee decided that the working group should continue to meet during its upcoming intersessional meeting, including in 2009, to discuss all related items listed on its agenda.

B. Other related matters

Non-governmental organizations requesting change of name

Organizations requesting name change deferred from previous sessions

77. At its 27th meeting, on 5 June 2008, the Committee took note of the change of name requested by the organization Transnational Radical Party (general, 1995) to its new name, Nonviolent Radical Party, Transnational and Transparty.

New requests of organizations for name change

78. At its 27th meeting, on 5 June 2008, the Committee took note of the change of names of the following seven organizations:

Fondation canadienne des droits de la personne/Canadian Human Rights Foundation (special, 1997) to Equitas International Centre for Human Rights Education/Equitas centre international d'education aux droits humains

Humanist Committee on Human Rights (special, 2005) to Aim for human rights

Intermediate Technology Development Group (roster, 1987) to Practical Action

International Conference Volunteers (special, 2005) to ICVolunteers

Leonard Cheshire International (special, 2006) to Leonard Cheshire Disability

Mercy Corps International (special, 1998) to Mercy Corps

Support Coalition International (roster, 2001) to MindFreedom International

Non-governmental organizations that have informed the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the termination of their activities or that have ceased to exist

79. At its 27th meeting, on 5 June 2008, the Committee took note of the termination of the activities of the organization International League for the Rights and Liberations of Peoples.

Statements by non-governmental organizations at the substantive session of 2008 of the Economic and Social Council

80. At its 28th meeting, on 5 June 2008, the Committee took note of the requests submitted by the 44 organizations to be heard by the Economic and Social Council at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2008 (see E/2008/82):[1]

Annual ministerial review: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development

Sulabh International (special, 1996)

Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (general, 2002)

Confédération des bijoutiers, joailliers et orfèvres (special, 2006)

Convention of Independent Financial Advisors (special, 2007)

United Nations Association of China (general, 2000)

Foundation for Subjective Experience and Research (roster, 2003)

Help Handicapped International (special, 2004)

Association tunisienne des mères (general, 2001)

World Trade Centers Association (special, 1977)

World Family Organization (general, 1948)

Women's Federation for World Peace International (general, 1997)

Mulchand and Parpati Thadhani Foundation (roster, 2004)

[1] Current status and year in which the organization was granted that status appear in parentheses after the organization's name.

Ius Primi Viri International Association (special, 2004)

Mumbai Educational Trust (special, 2003)

Oasis Open City Foundation (special, 2003)

Legião da Boa Vontade (general, 1999)

International Union of Economists (general, 1999)

Foundation for Research on Technology Migration and Integration (special, 2007)

African Action on AIDS (special, 2003)

Shinji Shumeikai (special, 2004)

Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (special, 2004)

All India Shah Behram Baug Society for Scientific and Educational Research (special, 2004)

Dianova International (special, 2007)

International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation (special, 2000)

Adventist Development and Relief Agency (general, 1997)

S. M. Sehgal Foundation (special, 2005)

International Movement ATD Fourth World (general, 1991)

Institute of International Social Development (special, 2000)

Yachay Wasi (roster, 2001)

International Network of Street Papers (roster, 2004)

Brazilian Foundation of America (special, 2006)

People's Decade of Human Rights Education (special, 1998)

Fundación Diagrama Intervención Psicosocial (special, 2007)

Development Cooperation Forum

International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (special, 2004)

Volontari nel Mondo: FOCSIV (special, 2004)

Inter-Press Service International Association (general, 1991)

Foundation for Research on Technology Migration and Integration (special, 2007)

ActionAid (special, 1991)

African Women's Development and Communication Network (special, 1996)

Eastern African Subregional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (special, 2004)

UBUNTU World Forum of Civil Society Networks (special, 2006)

CIVICUS: Worldwide Alliance for Citizen Participation (general, 2004)

Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (special, 2005)

United Cities and Local Governments (general, 1947)

VI. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46

81. There were no requests for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46.

VII. Consideration of special reports

World Union for Progressive Judaism

82. At its 17th meeting, on 29 May 2008, the Committee had before it a complaint lodged by the delegation of Cuba, in its capacity as Chair of the coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, against the World Union for Progressive Judaism, a non-governmental organization based in the United States, having roster status with the Council. The representative of Cuba informed the Committee that during the sixth special session of the Human Rights Council on the theme "Human rights violations emanating from Israeli military incursions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory" held in Geneva on 23 and 24 January 2008, the representative of the non-governmental organization had attempted during his intervention to delve into issues that fell beyond the scope of the mandate of the Human Rights Council. The President of the Council, Doru Costea (Romania), asked the representative twice to focus on the issue at hand; nevertheless, he continued his intervention in the same vein. When given a third and final reminder by the President of the Council to focus on the issue at hand, the representative of the non-governmental organization paraphrased Shakespeare, saying, "Rather than speak, I will conclude with one sentence. There is a general malaise in the air, a feeling that something is rotten in the state of this Council."

83. The representative of Cuba stated that the misconduct of the representative of the World Union for Progressive Judaism ran counter to the principles governing the establishment of consultative relations with non-governmental organizations, as stipulated in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31. He requested that the secretariat of the Human Rights Council in Geneva investigate the matter and submit its findings to the Committee to determine whether the organization had abused its status, in which case the Committee would have to take action.

84. A lengthy debate ensued, during which a number of States requested that a report be submitted to the Committee by 3 June.

85. The representative of the United States stated that, while he agreed to the investigation, he did not believe that the deadline of 3 June allowed sufficient time to gather all the facts. He was also aware that the representative of the organization had had a dialogue with the President of the Human Rights Council, outside the official meeting, during which an apology might have been issued. The representative of Israel believed that the Committee should also hear the views of

the President of the Human Rights Council on the incident. The representative of Egypt was of the view that, if it was true that the representative of the non-governmental organization had apologized informally, there should not be a problem for the organization to do so in writing. He also highlighted that the case had been given more time than previous ones, given the fact that both the organization and the secretariat of the Human Rights Council in Geneva had been notified by the Section on 22 May 2008, upon the decision of the informal working group of the Committee. Requests were also made to air a video recording of the incident in the meeting room.

86. On 3 June, the Committee resumed consideration of the complaint and viewed the portion of the webcast referring to the comments made by the non-governmental organization representative, object of the complaint. The Committee also had before it a letter from the president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism and a response from the secretariat of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The latter informed the Committee that the secretariat had not received any request from either the President or any member of the Council for an investigation to be carried out. Additionally, there was no evidence of any potential security risk in the particular situation, which would have triggered an internal investigation report by the secretariat.

87. The representatives of Cuba, Egypt and Qatar expressed dissatisfaction with the letter from the president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, which they found misleading and manipulative. They said the letter was defending the representative of the organization in Geneva and did not include an apology for his misconduct. Rather, it expressed regret that others felt offended by the misconduct of the representative of the organization, for which he had offered his apology to the President of the Human Rights Council after the Council's meeting. They reiterated that the organization, like any other organization, should be held accountable for the actions and wrongdoings of its representatives, regardless of intent. They stressed that the misconduct in the incident, as also expressed in the words of the representative of the organization, was directed at the Human Rights Council, not personally at its honourable president. The Council was an inter-governmental body whose members were elected to represent the general membership of the United Nations, and non-conformity with the principles and arrangements governing relations with non-governmental organizations was not permissible. Consequently, the representative of Cuba requested that the Committee consider appropriate action in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31.

88. The representatives of Israel, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States asked for additional time to review the facts and information before the Committee. The representatives of the United States and Israel said they felt that the letter was a letter of apology, that it addressed the issue and was sufficient.

89. The president of the organization addressed the Committee, stressing that there had been no intention on the part of the organization to offend any member State of the Human Rights Council and stressed that his letter meant to provide an unconditional apology. He reiterated his apology for the language used by the representative of the organization and indicated would submit another letter to that effect. The second letter was submitted and circulated to the members of the Committee the next day, and was considered as an acceptable apology by the Committee.

90. On 6 June, the Chairman of the Committee read a letter of reprimand submitted by Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement after consultations with other members of the Committees, to be sent to the World Union for Progressive Judaism. The letter was approved by consensus.

91. The representative of the United States underlined the 36 years of service the organization had provided to the United Nations, emphasizing its good work. He expressed regret that the Committee had felt it necessary to send a letter reprimanding the organization and asserted the belief of his delegation that the case should have been closed after the president of the organization had made a sincere apology before the Committee. His statement was seconded by the representative of Israel, who emphasized that the organization had a long and respected relationship with the United Nations and had always acted in such a way as to uphold the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and promote democracy, peace and justice. Regarding the text of the letter to be sent to the organization, he said that there had been lengthy discussions on that matter and that his delegation only reluctantly agreed to the consensus.

92. The representative of Cuba highlighted that the Non-Aligned Movement had shown flexibility in order to obtain a consensus. He insisted that the organization had acted inappropriately, and that, consequently, an action by the Committee was required. He expressed the belief that the letter approved by the Committee fulfilled such a requirement. He also expressed confidence that the organization would take the necessary measures to ensure that the said incident was not repeated, underlining that the Committee had the prerogative to monitor the activities of the organization to confirm that the organization and its representatives conformed at all times to the principles governing the establishment and nature of its consultative relations with the Economic and Social Council.

Liberal International

93. At its 31st meeting, on 25 June 2008, the Committee considered the reinstatement of the consultative status of Liberal International, an organization based in the United Kingdom, which had had its consultative status suspended for one year (see Council decision 2007/229). The Chairman of the Committee read the following statement:

> The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations takes note and acknowledges the fact that one year of suspension of the organization Liberal International will come to an end on 20 July 2008.

VIII. General voluntary trust fund in support of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network

94. At its 26th meeting, on 4 June 2008, the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Hanifa Mezoui, presented the progress report of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE). She introduced the activities that had been conducted in Asia, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region round table on the Economic and Social Council's

promotion and achievement of Millennium Development Goals through education and outreach held in Bangkok and the third conference of UN-NGO-IRENE/Asia-Pacific on sustainable development and green Olympics held in Beijing. Both outreach activities were focused on the 2008 theme of the annual ministerial review: "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development". The outreach for Arab States planned for the fourth quarter of 2008 was also described.

95. The two-day round table brought together over 100 high-level civil society members, including policy experts and opinion makers, as well as representatives of the United Nations, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and academia, all of whom deliberated on the challenges that South-East Asian countries face in achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals in time for 2015. The creation of the ASEAN Regional Centre of Excellence on the Millennium Development Goals was held during the event and the Asian Institute of Technology was designated as the permanent site of the world's first ASEAN Regional Centre of Excellence on the Millennium Development Goals dedicated to the promotion and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in South-East Asia through education and training. The president of the Asian Institute of Technology received a video message from the Secretary-General welcoming the initiative by stating that the new Centre and its local and regional affiliates would provide continuity for their initiatives and that they would also serve as key Millennium Development Goals hubs promoting development activities throughout the region. The outcome of the round table was a declaration that provided the guidelines for the Centre.

96. Another important undertaking of the network was organized by China NGO Network for International Exchanges, an organization which is recommended for general consultative status at the present session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. The event was supported by the UN-NGO-IRENE in Beijing and the Non-Governmental Organizations Section and was attended by officials from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Public Information together with over 200 representatives of about 100 non-governmental organizations from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and Viet Nam. Coordinators of UN-NGO-IRENE from Latin America, Eastern Europe, South Asia, East Asia and Africa took the opportunity of the conference to convene a planning coordination meeting.

97. The meeting unanimously adopted a statement acknowledging the concept of green Olympics advocated and practiced by the organizers of the Beijing Olympic Games, whereby the idea of sustainability was incorporated into the preparation of the Games, as a major contribution to both the Millennium Development Goals and the Olympic spirit. The participants also carried out a lengthy discussion on generating employment and promoting sustainable development and on eradicating poverty and promoting sustained economic growth for social development, in line with the 2008 themes of the Economic and Social Council.

98. At the request of the delegation of Egypt, the outreach for Arab States planned for the fourth quarter of 2008 was also presented, as a more active regional network was needed in the Arab world, where only 164 non-governmental organizations were in consultative status with the Council. Due to the UN-NGO-IRENE outreach

programme, the number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council originating from the South has increased by 14 per cent from 1998 to 2007. The Informal Regional Network is now established in various parts of the world and regional coordinators have taken on functions for the following regions: Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific, North America and Eastern Europe.

99. The delegations of China, Cuba, Egypt, the Russian Federation and the Sudan expressed their appreciation for the work accomplished by the UN-NGO-IRENE as it facilitated communication with non-governmental organizations from the developing countries that needed a greater voice and a higher profile.

IX. Provisional agenda and documentation for the 2009 session of the Committee

100. At its 31st meeting, on 25 June 2008, the Committee considered agenda item 10, provisional agenda and documentation for the 2009 session of the Committee. It had before it the draft provisional agenda for its 2009 session (E/C.2/2008/L.3).

101. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council the following dates for the sessions in 2009: 19 to 28 January for its 2009 regular session and 18 to 27 May for its resumed 2009 session (see chap. I, draft decision IV, subpara. (a)).

102. Also at the same meeting, the Committee approved the provisional agenda for its 2009 session for submission to the Economic and Social Council (chap. I, draft decision IV, subpara. (a)).

X. Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

103. The Committee held its resumed 2008 session from 29 May to 6 June and on 25 June 2008. The Committee held 15 meetings.

B. Attendance

104. The session was attended by the 19 members of the Committee.

105. Thirteen observers for other States Members of the United Nations; two observers for non-member States, a representative of an organization of the United Nations system and observers for non-governmental organizations also attended. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.

106. At its 2008 resumed session, the Committee heard seven representatives of non-governmental organizations, who were given the opportunity to respond to questions raised by the Committee. The additional information provided by the representatives facilitated the debate and the work of the Committee in taking its decisions.

C. Agenda

107. At its 31st meeting, on 25 June 2008, the Committee had before it the provisional agenda for its 2008 session, as adopted at the first meeting of its regular session (E/C.2/2008/1).

108. At the same meeting, the Committee approved its organization of work.

D. Documentation

109. The list of documents before the Committee at its resumed 2008 session is contained in annex II to the present report.

XI. Adoption of the report of the Committee at its resumed 2008 session

110. At its 31st meeting, on 25 June 2008, the Committee adopted the draft report (E/C.2/2008/L.4) and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report, in consultation with the members of the Committee, as appropriate.

Annex I

List of participants

Members

Angola	Estevao Alberto, Salvador Jesús
Burundi	Heménégilde Nkurabagaya, Albert Shingiro
China	Guo Jiakun, Zhang Dan, Zhou Feng
Colombia	Betty Escorcia, Jorge Torres
Cuba	Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz, Ileana Núñez Mordoche, Luis Amorós Núñez, Mirta Granda Averhoff, Claudia Pérez Alvarez, Samuel Babilonia Ballate
Dominica	Crispin S. Gregoire, Zilpha Theodore
Egypt	Wael M. Attiya, Mohamed Elghitany
Guinea	Paul Goa Zoumanigui
India	B. N. Reddy
Israel	Ilan Fluss, Elyasaf Schwartz
Pakistan	Bilal Hayee, Aqsa Nawaz
Peru	Romy Tincopa, Gonzalo Guillén, Edgard Perez Alva
Qatar	Tariq Al-Ansari, Mohammed Al-Kuwari
Romania	Octavian Stamate, Alexandro Ciorobea
Russian Federation	Boris V. Chernenko, Oleg A. Demekhin, Grigory E. Lukiyantsev, Vladimir Y. Zheglov, Alexander Abramov
Sudan	Hassan Hamid Hassan, Amar Daoud
Turkey	Serhat Aksen, Ramis Şen, Omer Zarpli
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Harriet Cross, Jonna Jeurlink, Simon Finn
United States of America	Brian Young, Paul Birdsall, Peggy Kerry

States Members of the United Nations represented by observers

Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Chile, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Morocco, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Viet Nam.

Annex II

List of documents

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/C.2/2008/1	2	Provisional agenda and annotations
E/C.2/2008/CRP.11	2	High-level segment of the Economic and Social Council
E/C.2/2008/CRP.7	3 (a)	Applications received from non-governmental organizations for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council deferred from previous sessions of the Committee held from 1999 to 2008
E/C.2/2008/CRP.9	3 (a)	Applications received from non-governmental organizations for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council deferred from previous sessions of the Committee held from 1999 to 2008
E/C.2/2008/R.3/Add.2	3 (b)	Requests for reclassification
E/C.2/2008/R.2/Add.21-31	3 (b)	New applications received from non-governmental organizations for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council
E/C.2/2008/CRP.8	4 (a)	Compilation of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council deferred from previous sessions held from 1999 to 2008
E/C.2/2008/2/Add.12-36	4 (b)	Quadrennial reports for the period 2003-2006 submitted through the Secretary-General pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31
E/C.2/2008/CRP.10	9	General voluntary trust fund in support of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network
E/C.2/2008/L.2	11	Draft report